UNITED NATIONS **S**

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/1998/295
3 April 1998

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

LETTER DATED 3 APRIL 1998 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES A.I. OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF SIERRA LEONE TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

As the sanctions imposed on Sierra Leone by the Security Council in its resolution 1132 (1997) of 8 October 1997 will be coming up for review soon by the Council in accordance with paragraph 17 of the resolution, I would like to convey my Government's position on the matter.

The Government is of the strong view that the sanctions imposed by paragraphs 5 and 6 should still remain in force. Fighting is still going on in some parts of the eastern province and heinous crimes like genocide, murder, rape, arson, looting and so on are being committed on a daily basis by remnants of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council/Revolutionary United Front junta. It will therefore not be in the best interest of the country to lift either the arms embargo or travel restrictions at this time. Lifting the arms embargo now will allow the junta to start importing more arms into the country and this will lead to the intensification of the war. As most of the leaders of the junta, including Johnny Paul, the so-called Chairman, are still trapped in the country, lifting the restrictions now will just allow them to flee from the country and hence from justice. Until normalcy has completely returned to the country, my Government will urge that they should not be allowed to travel to any Member State of the United Nations to enjoy their ill-gotten gains.

The Government should be allowed to consolidate the peace it has started building in the country. I therefore appeal for the support and understanding of members of the Security Council on this issue.

I would be most grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Fode M. DABOR
Deputy Permanent Representative
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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